

Senate Resolution 655

By: Senators Orrock of the 36th, Unterman of the 45th, Hufstetler of the 52nd, Fort of the 39th, Ligon, Jr. of the 3rd and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging adult citizens of Georgia to strongly consider preparing an advance directive for
2 health care that appoints their health care agent and states their treatment preferences; and
3 for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, a Georgia advance directive for health care is a voluntarily executed, written
5 document that allows an adult to designate a health care agent to make health care decisions
6 when the adult cannot or does not want to make health care decisions for himself or herself
7 and allows the adult to state his or her treatment preferences if he or she has a terminal
8 condition or is in a state of permanent unconsciousness and cannot communicate; and

9 WHEREAS, health care agents must be willing and able to serve, willing to follow the
10 treatment preferences discussed with the person or documented in the person's advance
11 directive for health care, and able to weigh the benefits and burdens of treatments should the
12 person be unsure about his or her treatment preferences; and

13 WHEREAS, adults should also communicate their treatment preferences to their primary
14 care provider and give their physician a copy of their completed advance directive for health
15 care; and

16 WHEREAS, an advance directive for health care can help ease the burden of those who have
17 to make treatment decisions on behalf of others; and

18 WHEREAS, adults who have an advance directive for health care have the freedom to
19 change their appointed health care agent or their treatment preferences, or both, at any time;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia joins other national, state, and community organizations
22 in recognizing April 16, 2013, as the annual Health Care Decisions Day, which has been

23 established to encourage advance care planning for all adults with decision-making capacity;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, health care providers should encourage their patients to complete an advance
26 directive for health care and provide support to those who request assistance.

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
28 encourage Georgians who have serious medical conditions to talk with their doctors about
29 available treatment options, specifically life-sustaining treatments, and the benefits and
30 burdens of such treatments.

31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of this body urge all adult Georgians to
32 consider what treatments they would want if they were rendered unable to make or
33 communicate their own health care decisions; to complete and maintain an advance directive
34 for health care and keep multiple copies in a safe, accessible place; to provide a copy of their
35 advance directive for health care for their physician and hospital to include in their medical
36 record; and to appoint a health care agent who they trust to carry out their wishes and help
37 make the decisions necessary to preserve their well-being.